

Albert Jackson House  
1694 31st Street, N.W.  
Washington (Georgetown)  
District of Columbia

HABS No. DC-181

HABS  
DC  
GEO  
104-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## ALBERT JACKSON HOUSE

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Location: 1694 31st Street, N.W. (Georgetown), Washington, D.C.  
The house is located on the west side of 31st Street  
(formerly Congress) near R Street.

Present Occupant: Mr. and Mrs. Martin Millett

Present Owners: Same

Present Use: Private Residence

Statement of Significance: This house is the only remaining Georgetown example  
of a late Victorian bargeboarded cottage.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: The building is located in Square 1281, lot 812 of original lot 3 from a subdivision of Tudor Place. The following is an incomplete chain of title to the property. The references are to the Recorder of Deeds, Washington D.C.

1869 Deed May 3, 1869, recorded June 12, 1869 in  
Liber 10, folio 53  
George Washington Peter et ux Jane  
To  
William H. Godey  
Lots 2 and 3

1878 Deed August 5, 1878, recorded August 6, 1878 in  
Liber 898, folio 1  
Mary E. Godey  
To  
Albert B. Jackson

1959 Deed April 24, 1959, recorded August 5, 1959 in  
Liber 11235, folio 321  
Edna Jackson Baker  
To  
Samuel Levy

Deed June 25, 1959, recorded June 25, 1959 in  
Liber 11263, folio 80  
Samuel Levy  
To  
Eluned Millar

1967 Deed June 28, 1967, recorded July 14, 1967 in  
Liber 12774, folio 121  
Eluned McLaren Millar and John Y. Millar  
To  
Martha Rockwell Millett

2. Date of Erection: 1878-80. Albert B. Jackson took out a building permit on September 17, 1878 (Permit #B 1272) for a two story brick dwelling on Congress between Stoddard and Road Streets, in the amount of \$4,000. He is listed in the 1880 City Directory at "Congress near Road" (now 31st Street near R).
3. Architect: Unknown
4. Original plans, construction, etc.: None known
5. Alterations and additions: All exterior trim is original although the front porch was removed in 1959. At that time, the original kitchen was converted into the present dining room and the original second parlor was partitioned to form the present library and kitchen. Walk-in closets in the second floor bedrooms have been converted into baths.
6. Important old views: The present owners of the house possess a photograph which seems to have been taken shortly after the completion of the house.

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

1. Washington City directories provide the following tenant information:

1880-1920	Albert Jackson, and Mrs. Josephine Jackson
1921-48	Harry J. Baker
1952-60	Guy C. Jones
1960	John Y. Millar
1964	Livingstone Biddle
1965	McNair Pierce
1966	Jack Valenti
1967	Stephen Millett

Prepared by Ellen J. Schwartz  
Architectural Historian  
Commission of Fine Arts  
October, 1968

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This late Victorian brick house with its elaborate wood decoration has been renovated, both interior and exterior, in the past few years. It is a fine example of a cottage style detached residence with the appropriate rich but light ornamentations. This includes wood brackets, barge boards, gable ends, and lintels (heads.) Originally a turned wood porch at the south, and corbelled chimney tops further enriched the exterior.
2. Condition of fabric: It is in very good condition and is well maintained.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: This 2 1/2 story house faces east onto 31st Street between Q and R Streets, and is approximately 50' along 31st Street from the centerline of R Street. The house is 46' deep by 28' wide; with a 19' by 18' elevation at the rear (west).
2. Foundations: The brick foundation wall is exposed about 3' 6" around the building.
3. Wall construction: The solid brick bearing walls have been painted gray with the wood trim a contrasting off-white.
4. Framing: There are both plastered masonry and wood stud partitions in the house.
5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads, etc.: Originally there was a one-story front porch of Victorian "gingerbread" along the eastern 22' of the south side of the house, now replaced by an open deck. There is a small stoop off the dining room at the west end, and another off the kitchen at the north side.
6. Chimneys: There were originally four chimneys: one on the north side of the living room, one on the north side of the kitchen, one on the south side of the library, and one at the west end of the dining room. There were ornamental brickwork caps, greatly simplified in the recent remodeling. The westernmost chimney was removed at this time.

7. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: The original front door has been replaced with a pair of glazed doors in the original opening which leads directly from the south-east porch-deck into the entry hall. There is a heavy, elaborate machine-carved wood head over the doorway. Other exterior doors, all modern, open off the dining room and the kitchen.
- b. Windows and shutters: Windows in general are tall one over one double-hung wood sash, and those on the east and south elevations have the same heavy machine-carved wood heads as the front door. There are wood louvered shutters on both the upper and lower windows. The east end has three windows forming a bay at the first floor level. There are also some recent casement windows in new dormers at the rear of the third floor. At the south elevation second floor, a bathroom window has been added.

8. Roof:

- a. Shape, covering: There are three ridge lines, two running east-west and one running north-south, forming gables on the east end, the south center, the west end, the north center. The roofs are covered with gray-green slate in two shades, in a geometric pattern.
- b. Cornice, eaves: The most arresting feature of the house is the profusion of scroll-sawn and lathe-turned ornamentation that billows around the roof-line like somewhat heavy lace. The barge boards of the gables are elaborately treated, and their off-white paint sets them off in distinct contrast to the gray-green painted brick.
- c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: There is one large 20th century dormer at the rear of the third floor, a simple shed-roofed structure with casement windows.

C. Description of the Interior:

1. Floor plans: The first floor has a living room at the east end, an entry-stair hall running north-south through the center, a study on the south and a kitchen on the north, with a dining room in an ell at the rear. The study and kitchen once formed a double room with a pair of sliding doors (now removed), between them, and the

present dining room was the kitchen. The second floor has a bedroom at the east end, the stair hall west of that with a bathroom above the front door, a center hall running east-west with a bedroom on each side, and a bedroom with bath at the west end. The third floor has a bedroom with bath at the east end, the stair hall west of that, and large playroom-studio across the rear. The basement is divided into three large areas demarcated by the masonry bearing walls.

2. Stairways: The main stair ascends along the east wall of the stair-entry hall to a series of winders at the north end and returns along the west wall to the second floor. The stair to the third floor repeats this pattern. There is also a small enclosed rear stair which ascends from west to east along the north wall of the dining room (former kitchen) in a straight run with winders at each end to the second floor. The basement stair runs beneath this one, beginning in the present kitchen.
3. Flooring: Floors in general are oak strip, covered with carpet in many areas; resilient tile in the kitchen, basement, baths, and third floor playroom-studio. The entry hall has a slate floor of 20th century date.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: In general walls are plaster, painted.
5. Doorways and doors: Typical doors have four raised panels with applied quirked cyma sticking, although some of the doors inserted on the upper floors in the recent renovations are louvered or flush hollow-core units.
6. Decorative features and trim: Both the living room and the entry hall have deeply coved molded plaster cornices and heavy foliated medallions in the centers of the ceilings. The original trim, which still exists at most openings, is 6 1/2" wide and heavily molded. Many windows have white-painted folding louvered shutters added in the mid 20th century.
7. Notable hardware: Original existing hardware is of very simple late Victorian design; new hardware is unobtrusive.

8. Lighting: There are no original fixtures.
9. Heating: There is a modern furnace in the central portion of the basement. Fireplace mantels in the dining room (former kitchen), present kitchen, south and east bedrooms have been removed; those remaining in the living room and study are heavily molded stone mantels with arched openings, skillfully painted to look like very dark marble.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Located on the west side of 31st Street, the house faces east with its entrance on the south. The north wall is approximately 2' 6" from its neighbor to the north, while the front side and rear yards are quite ample. The neighborhood is typical of Georgetown, combining large detached residences, row houses, and walkup-apartments.
2. Enclosures: Wood fences enclose the rear yard, while an ornamental iron fence runs along the sidewalk at the front yard.
3. Outbuildings: None
4. Walks: Walks are of concrete, brick, and flagstone.
5. Landscaping: There is much planned plant material on the property. The general effect is that of a well-tended informal landscape. In addition to the planting around the house there are also several large architectural pots containing plants on the front entrance deck.

Prepared by The Office of  
Walter G. Peter, Jr., AIA  
Architect  
April, 1969